

Remarks

Claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0157098 to Wexel et al. ("Wexel et al."). In addition, claims 8-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wexel et al.

Claims 1-10 remain pending in this application. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and objections in view of the following remarks is hereby respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) and 103:

Claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Wexel et al. and claims 8-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable in view of Wexel et al.

Wexel et al. was published on August 12, 2004 from a U.S. patent application filed on February 7, 2003, and thus has that effective prior art date under 35 U.S.C. §102(e). Applicants have claimed the benefit of the filing date of applicants' German priority application No. DE 102 32 870.6, filed on July 19, 2002. Applicants have previously submitted a certified copy of the priority document, DE 102 32 870.6. An English-language translation of that document is submitted herewith, along with a statement that the translation of the certified copy is accurate.

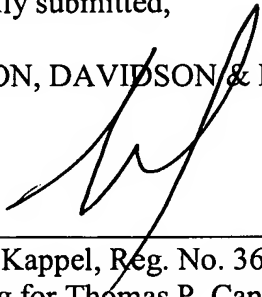
Accordingly, applicants have overcome the Wexel et al. reference by perfecting the claim to priority to an earlier filing date, 35 CFR 1.44(a)(4), and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection to claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and to claims 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on this reference.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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